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BOOK REVIEWS

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS. ALLAN MENZIES, D.D. The Macmillan Co. 1912. Pp. lvii, 111. \$2.00.

Professor Menzies has rendered a great service to all English-speaking students of the Bible by the publication of his brief commentary on Second Corinthians. While helps for the interpretation of most other New Testament writings have continued to multiply, this important Epistle has received little attention; and yet it is surely here if anywhere that the ordinary reader will welcome all the expert guidance that the best scholarship can give him.

In another regard also the appearance of this commentary is most timely. It has become quite the fashion in England and America to approve the hypothesis which separates chapters 10-13 from the rest of Second Corinthians, and regards them as part of a painful letter that had been previously written by the apostle to the same community (2 3 ff.; 7 8 ff.). Of late so many writers have expressed themselves as in accord with this view that it seemed in the way of gaining currency without serious opposition as a reasonably well established conclusion. There was need that the case for the integrity of the Epistle be worthily presented again and brought up to date. This has been done by Professor Menzies in his introduction and notes.

The main arguments for dividing the Epistle have been derived from the abrupt change of tone and subject at 10 1 and from supposed references in chapters 10-13 to passages in the earlier part of the letter (13 1, 2, 10, cf. 2 1-4; 13 2, cf. 1 23; 10 6, cf. 2 9). As for the first point, Professor Menzies maintains that chapters 10-13 do not differ so radically from what has preceded as is often assumed. There is abundant evidence that the apostle is confronted by the same opponents throughout the entire letter. The innuendoes of these intruders are echoed unmistakably in 1-9 (1 24; 2 17; 3 1, 5-10; 4 2, 4; 5 13, 16; 7 2) and are more clearly stated when a point is reached in 10-13, where he is compelled to measure himself with them in anticipation of the encounter face to face. By the opening words of chapter 10 he intimates "that he is now to speak of things personal to himself, with which Timothy is not concerned"

(p. 69). He then proceeds in 10 1-6 with the topic of "his impending visit to Corinth, distinctly announced in 9 4, 5, and sketches the manner in which he expects it to turn out to various sets of people" (p. 69). The second point is so far conceded as to admit that the passages in question may be so interpreted as to support a theory of division, but they can also be understood as constituent parts of one letter and are so explained by Professor Menzies.

In favor of the unity of the Epistle much emphasis is rightly placed upon the fact that chapters 10-13 are full of the theme of Paul's impending arrival at Corinth, whereas the painful letter was written in place of a contemplated visit and perhaps excused the apostle's failure to come as expected (1 23-2 13; 1 15; 7 5-13). It may be added that there is nowhere any indication that a further message or report is looked for from his readers before he sees them. The entire Epistle is composed from the point of view of an approaching visit to the church.

It is further argued by Professor Menzies that chapters 10-13 do not meet the requirements of a letter that was written with tears. They seem to him to reflect rather "the consciousness of achievement and of power" (p. xxxvi). To assume that anguish of heart and tears were more particularly characteristic of the portion that has not been preserved is hazardous. Under such circumstances the painful letter would closely resemble our present Second Corinthians in being made up of two markedly differing parts. The theory of division is compelled in any case to lean heavily upon a missing fragment whose proportions can have fallen little short of those of a full letter. It contained practically all the explanations and allusions that are absolutely indispensable as a background for 1-9. Nor can one ever forget that we have as yet no manuscript authority or Patristic evidence for the dismemberment of our present letter.¹ If there was an early editing of epistolary material, Professor Menzies thinks that we must conclude that "the most difficult and the severest passages surely have been selected, and then joined together, to be kept" (p. xxxvii).

The evidence for the unity of the letter afforded by the allusions to Titus (8 16-22; 12 16-18) deserves even more emphasis than it has received in the work before us. In the first place, the striking resemblance in phraseology between the passages points to the same time of writing. Professor Menzies lays stress on the fact that in 12 18 we have only a casual reference to Titus, the responsible

¹ For Professor Menzies' discussion of Professor Kennedy's argument regarding this point, see *The Expositor*, Eighth Series, p. 372 ff. (October, 1913).

leader of the deputation, and to his immediate associate. This is quite in order, coming as it does after the full, formal introduction and authentication in 8 16-24. But the same could not be said if the order of the passages is inverted. He interprets the first two verbs in 12 18, as well as those in 8 17, 18, 22, as epistolary aorists and refers them to the mission which the delegates are about to undertake. Should one prefer to regard them as historical aorists, recalling facts that are now already past, then the argument of Professor Menzies will need to be recast, but it will not be weakened. In any event, most agree that Paul is looking backward when he asks, "Did Titus take advantage of you?" If the apostle could make such an appeal in what is held to be a part of the painful letter, then Titus must have been active in Corinth at some earlier time. Of this we have no evidence. On the contrary, the statement in 7 14 seems to indicate that he was unacquainted with the Corinthians until his mission as bearer of the painful letter. Accordingly, a further hypothesis becomes necessary if we divide the Epistle; namely, that of an earlier and unrecorded activity of Titus at Corinth. If, however, we follow Professor Menzies, the question in 12 18 and the allusion in 8 6 are to be understood as recalling what Titus was able to accomplish on behalf of the collection after the unexpectedly happy outcome of his difficult mission.

It has been charged that Professor Menzies underestimates the force of the argument for the inversion of the two parts of Second Corinthians. If this is true, it can be said, on the other hand, that he might have strengthened the cause of the integrity of the Epistle, and doubtless he would have done so had the plan of his commentary permitted a full discussion of textual details. He does not press certain arguments of secondary importance. For example, he would allow that the charge that Paul sought to terrify his converts by his letters (10 1, 9-11) might be made on the basis of Galatians, and possibly other Epistles, as well as in the light of the painful letter. It still remains true, however, that such an accusation would be particularly in place after *the one* letter, regarding which the apostle himself had so much misgiving. Furthermore, it is natural to think that Paul's adversaries in seeking to discredit him would refer to letters that were well known, rather than to those that had been addressed to other churches and that quite likely were unknown in Corinth at this time.

Professor Menzies does not omit to call attention to the strong feeling underlying the earlier chapters of the letter. It is too often assumed that all is here bathed in an atmosphere of calmness and

reconciliation. In truth, the only question that is distinctly said to have been satisfactorily settled is that touching the punishment of the offender (7 11 ff.). Paul had hoped, apparently not without some misgiving, that the church would support his demands in this instance, and he has not been disappointed. When he speaks enthusiastically of the satisfaction that has come to him through the loyalty and obedience of his readers, he is probably thinking of their action in this particular case of discipline. There is abundant evidence in 1-9 that other issues are still unsettled and that the general situation leaves much to be desired (cf. 7 16; 1 13, 14; 2 6; 6 12, 13; 7 2). Again, it is not always recognized with sufficient clearness and consistency that the question settled in 1-7 concerns an offending member of the church, and that chapters 10-13 are taken up largely with false apostles who have come in from without and who are seeking in the basest way to discredit Paul. Apart from this threatened defection, although perhaps not unconnected with it, there is another grave delinquency that must receive attention. The same situation may be alluded to in 6 14-7 2, which is kept by Professor Menzies in its present context. The repeated warnings of the apostle against heathen vices had not been taken with sufficient seriousness by some within the church. It is now stated in no uncertain way that such moral defects cannot be further tolerated. In times past it has sometimes been erroneously supposed that such a situation cannot have existed when 1-9 was written, because of the unstinted praise which is there bestowed upon the church. It must, however, be borne in mind first, that there was greatest reason for cordially recognizing the loyalty that had been so signally manifested, and, secondly, that Paul is wont to bestow all possible commendation even when there is much in a church of which he disapproves (cf. 1 Cor. 1 5, 6). We may note too that in accordance with the apostle's custom in other letters, praise and blame are not here apportioned to any considerable extent, but that all his message is addressed to the church as a whole.

The opponents from without who are seeking to unsettle the loyalty of the Corinthians are identified by Professor Menzies with Greek-speaking Jewish Christians of the Dispersion. "It is not surprising if, even when circumcision ceased to be urged by Jewish Christians, they still regarded Paul's version of Christianity with deep dislike, and strove to draw his converts away from him" (p. xxxii). Our Epistle is believed to afford evidence that they had a particular aversion to Paul's Christology. A considerable section of Professor Menzies' introduction (pp. li-lviii) is devoted to the apostle's

teaching regarding the person of Christ and to the contrasted views of his opponents.

Particular mention should be made of the English translation of the Epistle, which has been prepared with unusual care and which is printed at the top of the right page opposite the Greek text which appears at the left. The notes given below on both pages are concerned mainly with the development of thought.

The commentary is bound to prove helpful and suggestive to all readers; but its brevity and popular character will often make the student of exegesis wish that the author would supplement it with a volume prepared on a different plan which should make possible a more adequate treatment of the many obscurities and difficulties that beset the interpretation of the Epistle.

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THE NEW TESTAMENT, WESTMINSTER VERSION. Vol. III. Part I. The Epistles to the Thessalonians. Rev. CUTHBERT LATTEY, S.J. Longmans, Green, & Co. 1913. Pp. xxiv, 21. 40 cents.

This translation, which is based mainly on the Greek text of Westcott and Hort, aims at intelligibility by using phraseology which is neither modern nor obsolete. It is more literal than that of Rutherford or Moffatt, and more dignified than that of the Twentieth Century New Testament. Concise notes accompany the translation and a brief but excellent introduction precedes it. If the standard of excellence set by the present work is maintained in the forthcoming volumes, the success of the Westminster Version is assured.

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A CRITICAL AND EXEGETICAL COMMENTARY ON THE BOOKS OF EZRA AND NEHEMIAH. (International Critical Commentary Series.) LORING W. BATTEN, Ph.D., S.T.D. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1913. Pp. xvi, 384. \$3.00.

One of the latest of a goodly number of volumes, with the appearance of which within the last few years the International Critical Commentary is approaching completion, is Professor L. W. Batten's Ezra and Nehemiah. Professor Batten's acquaintance with these two books is of long standing, his first work upon them being published in 1901 in the English version of Guthe's notes in the SBOT.